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ABSTRACT

Change agencies have to choose among a number of possible goals, such as a rapid increase in productivity or the personal development of their clients. Possible strategies include giving orders, provision of means and services, directive advice and non-directive help. The conditions under which each can be chosen and the consequences which can be expected are discussed briefly. Probably non-directive help will make the greatest contribution to the development of people. In order to be effective, a change agency should give much attention to the system of communication within the agency, and between the clients and the agents, to the motivation of the staff to work hard in the interest of the clients, to the coordination of activities within the agency and with other agencies, and to the flexibility in adjusting at changing situations. Giving orders and provision of means and services requires probably a rather hierarchical structure, whereas non-directive help can best be given by an organization with a participative pattern of leadership. One study found, however, that agents under authoritarian leadership are more willing to listen to their clients. The effects of different patterns of leadership in various cultures require further research. (Author/DB)

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GOALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND STRATEGIES OF CHANGE AGENCIES

Paper presented at the Seventh World Congress of Sociology, Varna, Bulgaria, September 1970.

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Summary	1
Introduction	2
Goals	3
Strategies	4
Conditions for the organization of a change agency	7
Groups influencing the change agencies program and methods	10
Structure of organization and pattern of leadership	11
Cultural factors in the effects of different leadership patterns	13
Organizational problems caused by a non-directive strategy	14
Some factors affecting success of programs	15
Need for further research	17

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Summary

There is a widespread feeling that many change agencies in developing as well as in developed countries are not very effective. One of the reasons might be that their organization is not optimum for the goals they have set and the strategies they have chosen to try to achieve these goals.

Change agencies have to choose among a number of possible goals, such as a rapid increase in productivity or the personal development of their clients. Possible strategies include giving orders, provision of means and services, directive advice and non-directive help. The conditions under which each can be chosen and the consequences which can be expected are discussed briefly. Probably non-directive help will make the greatest contribution to the development of people.

In order to be effective a change agency should give much attention to the system of communication within the agency, and between the clients and the agents, to the motivation of the staff to work hard in the interest of the clients, to the coordination of activities within the agency and with other agencies and to the flexibility in adjusting at changing situations. Giving orders and provision of means and services requires probably a rather hierarchical structure, whereas non-directive help can best be given by an organization with a participative pattern of leadership. One study found, however, that agents under authoritarian leadership are more willing to listen to their clients. The effects of different patterns of leadership in various cultures require further research.

Where representatives of the clients can influence the change program, their influence is frequently limited to details. This is perhaps caused by the difficulties to organize a program which tries to help a number of different groups and individuals with the problems they consider most important. Concentration on a few problems is easier to organize efficiently.

Introduction

In diffusion research a lot of attention has been given to the reaction of the clients to the actions of the change agents. Asthonishing is that the actions of the change agents and the interaction between these actions and the reactions of the clients are a relatively neglected field of study [1]. Textbooks on extension education give a good deal of attention to this topic, but usually they are not on the basis of much empirical research or on high level of social science theories.

The actions of the change agents, are influenced by their goals, the strategies they employ to reach these goals and the organization through which this strategy is executed. A basic question is whether these goals, strategies and organizations are attuned to each other. Possibly some of the criticism which one can hear nowadays about the effectiveness of change agencies is caused by an organizational structure which is not fitted for the strategies used or by strategies which are not suitable for their goals. It is possible e.g. that an organization which was developed to maintain law and order for a colonial government has not changed enough to be able to promote change efficiently.

When we speak of a change agency we speak of an organization which has as a major goal to help their clients to change their behavior. This definition implies that the intention is to further the interests of the clients. In some situations the clients decide what their interests are, in other situations the change agents do this for them. This last kind of situations have the danger that the interests of the change agents themselves or of the group they are representing have too much influence in decisions on the change one tries to achieve.

Our own experience is mainly with agricultural extension services. That is the reason that we give somewhat more attention to these organizations as to other kinds of change agencies, although we have tried to take a more general view.

Because of the limited amount of research in this field the objective of this paper can only be to stimulate further research in this area by drawing attention to relationships which need exploration and by formulating some hypotheses. With the data available it is not yet possible to present a theory of the organization of change agencies, which shows how goals, strategies and organization influence each other.

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1) Undoubtedly there are exceptions to this generalizations such as G. Bareiss, E. Hruschka und H. Rheinwald, 1962.

Goals

Goals of change agencies can be classified in a number of different ways. We mention the following classifications:

A. Diffusion researchers have usually assumed implicitly that change agencies try to improve the methods by which their clients achieve their goals. Probably most administrators are not so much interested in the methods used e.g. in farmpractices, or educational methods, but in the results obtained e.g. in farm production or income, in educational achievements. There is very little evidence that the methods used and the results achieved are highly correlated. In fact some studies show that there exists no correlation at all (e.g. S.P. Bose, 1965, and R. Dubin and T.C. Taveggia, 1968)

B. The change agents themselves see it frequently as their major role to educate their clients to enable them to solve their own problems in the future e.g. by becoming more capable farm managers or teachers. Few studies have measured whether this goal has been achieved [1]. Often the clients themselves do not expect their change agents to educate them, but to provide services for them such as giving information on new ideas or performing difficult jobs for them (Wilkening, 1958).

C. Some change agencies try to increase production as soon as possible, others are more interested in a decrease in the differences in income and in educational opportunities for the children among different sections of the population. Frequently in order to increase production most rapidly the change agents can achieve most by working with the relatively well to do people, who have the resources to try something new and often also a culture and education which makes it easier for them as for the poor people to understand the change agent and to follow his advice correctly.

D. Some change agencies try to help their clients to solve all the problems, whereas others are specialised in a certain kind of problems e.g. problems related to heart and vascular diseases.

E. Some change agencies try to work with all people in a given area, whereas others work only with a special group of the population.

F. Some of the older change agencies continue to work on the problems they have selected a generation ago without realizing that in the present situation other problems have become more important. For example for a farmer in Western Europe it is often much easier to get advice from the extension services on the proper uses of fertilizers than on the choice of another occupation, whereas it is clear that the key problem for the development of agriculture nowadays is the movement of a fair number of farmers out of agriculture.

1) Examples are Schuman (1967) and Nielson (1962)

Strategies

Change agencies can use many different strategies or usually a combination of different strategies. Space limitations permit us to mention only some of the major strategies used and to give for each of them some of the conditions under which they can be used. Unfortunately there is no evidence with regard to these conditions; it are only hypotheses.

A. Giving orders

This can be used if we wish that the clients achieve goals about which we have decided that they are good for them, we know how these goals can be achieved and we have the power to force others to do what we like. Sometimes these orders work quite well such as the WHO regulations on small pox prevention, but a serious disadvantage is that we do not develop the capabilities of the clients to make their own decisions. Another disadvantage is that the clients are usually much less motivated to execute the orders they have received than the decisions they have taken themselves, expecially when they do not believe that these orders have been given in their best interest. In fact in giving orders change agents might be inclined to take also in account interests of other population groups or even their own interests.

B. Provision of means

Provision of means and services such as cheap credit, subsidies for the adoption of innovations, analyzing the accounts for farmers etc. This strategy is widely used by change agencies all over the world. It can be used if the client desires to achieve goals which the change agency considers correct goals for him, but he does not have the means to achieve these goals, or he does not dare to invest the money he has, because of the risk involved in the innovation. If the change agent is sure that the innovation is profitable he can stimulate change with rather limited investments, e.g. by covering the risk for the first people who try an innovation. Afterwards they can be used to convince others of the success of the innovation. It is not known under what conditions a longterm provision of these means will have a positive effect on national income. Sometimes it can prevent employment, sometimes the redistribution of income involved might be profitable. In general we are quite hesitant to advocate the use of this strategy, although it will satisfy pressure groups rather easily. We believe that frequently more can be achieved with the same money by hiring well qualified staff for the change agency. Even if these subsidies are used for their demonstration effect, it might make the results of the demonstration unbelievable (e.g. Bareiss, Hruschka und Rheinwald, 1962) With this strategy we usually do not make an important contribution to the development of the people.

C. Directive advice

With this strategy the change agent tells his client how he can solve his problem. Sometimes this problem has been formulated by the client, sometimes the change agent has discovered that a problem exists. This strategy assumes that the change agent knows the problems and the situation of his client and that they agree on the goals the client should try to achieve. Formally the clients are completely free to follow or not to follow this advice, but the change agent might be inclined not to help a client the next time, if he did not follow his previous advice.

It is probably the most frequently used strategy, which can work well when these conditions are fulfilled. The change agents do not always realize that a disadvantage is that it does not teach the client how he can solve similar problems in the future, but keeps the client in a dependent position. Often the change agents complain that their clients do not follow their advice. Some of the reasons might be that the client has different goals than the change agent thinks he has or that the client did not yet recognize his problem at the moment the change agent provided information on the way in which it can be solved.

D. Non-directive help

This method originates from work by Carl Rogers with psychiatric patients, but is also frequently advocated for use by change agents (Batten, 1967, Van Beugen, 1968). The basic idea is that the change agent helps the clients to realize what their problems are, which resources they have and helps them to decide how they can use these resources best to solve their problems. For this purpose the change agent can help his client to think rationally to reconsider his goals, when they are not in agreement with each other, to help him to realize and accept how his emotions influence his decision-making and to help him to get the information he needs to make sound decisions (Houttuyn Pieper, 1968). The non-directive change agent is not just helping his clients with their felt needs, but also to make them aware of needs by reconsidering their own situation systematically. In this way vague dissatisfactions can be changed in action.

This non-directive strategy can be used when we believe that the clients have the right to decide themselves which goals they like to achieve, are confident that they can formulate their own problems and can make sound decisions for the solution of these problems without help, the clients have the confidence that they are capable to solve their own problems and have or can get the means to do so, that the clients do not expect that their wants will be met unless they do themselves something about it.

A major advantage of this method is probably that it can contribute a good deal to the capability of the clients to solve their own problems. This is the main reason why change agents are advised to use a non-directive strategy but they do not do it frequently at least not in pure form. One reason is the lack of training of most change agents in the use of this method. Another reason is that many clients, who have been used all their live to do what they are told to do, do not like to take the responsibility the non-directive strategy requires from them. It is easier to follow a directive advice as to take your own decisions in an uncertain situation.

Another advantage of the non-directive strategy can be that the clients are much more inclined to work on the execution of their own decisions than on the execution of decisionswhich some change agent has made for them.

A disadvantage seems that it takes time beforethe clients make their own decisions, certainly when the clients are not individuals but groups. The change agent must be willing to wait until the decisions are made. When the group, e.g. the village population, has several subgroups which are fighting with each other, it is doubtful whether they will ever make a decision.

If the goal of the change agency is to help the poor people to catch up in income and education with the more well to do people in the community, a non-directive strategy frequently promises the most success. Often the differences in culture between the change agent and the more well to do people are not very large.This makes it relatively easy to understand each other. Furthermore there is already a rather high level of confidence in each other. Poor people have often learned that they must distrust everybody who says that he likes to help them. To establish confidence in the change agent and to develop the willingness of the people to work themselves for their own betterment in cooperation with the change agent, we believe that a non-directive approach offers the best promise for success.

It is a pity that very little empirical evidence is available on the consequences of different strategies. There are some descriptions of what has been achieved in certain situations, but as far as we know the only experimental study in which different strategies have been compared was done in India over 15 years ago (Extension Evaluation, 1957)

In some villages the change agents started to help the people with agricultural problems and in other villages with their felt needs. In these last group of villages over twice as many practices were changed as in the first. However, the authors ask for further tests to substantiate or refute these findings, because the difference in results might be caused by other reasons than the difference in strategy. The literacy level of the people in the villages where oneworked on felt needs was e.g. considerable higher. The change in practices was reported by the change agents and this might not be the most reliable method.

Conditions for the organization of a change agency

How an institution can be organized most efficiently depends on the work it has to accomplish. Therefore a change agency has to be organized differently from a factory. Also for the change agencies the organization should be influenced by their strategy.We will mention first some conditions for the organization of a change agency which we believe hold true for all efficient change agencies and afterwards some, which depend on the strategy used. Again it are much more hypotheses than facts for which sufficient evidence is available.

All change agents have to be capable. This requires a good communication with research workers and other specialists in order to be kept informed about the latest new information. This should not be an one-way communication from the specialist to the change agent in the field. The information stream in the other direction might be at least as important in order to stimulate the research workers to investigate the major problems the change agents face in their work.

The change agent should not only be informed about the latest research findings but also on the situation and the problems of their clients in order to give realistic suggestions how these problems can be solved. Information on the way of thinking of these clients is at least as important as technical information on e.g. the fertility of their soils. This information should not only be available at the field level, but especially with the top level administrators. This requires a good communication upwards in the hierarchy.

Frequent contact with these clients is essential for obtaining this information as well as for influencing them. Rogers, Ashcroft and Röling have shown in their paper for this meeting that in those villages which have frequently been contacted by change agents many new farm practices have been adopted and that for the farmers in these villages there is a high correlation between contact with change agents and adoption of innovations.

The change agent should work long enough in the same area to get to know the people and their situation, to gain their confidence and to be interested in programs which can only have an impact in the long run as is usually the case with the development of people.

Another condition is that the change agent works hard, frequently under difficult conditions, without much supervision. In a factory or an office it is much easier to supervise the staff as in a change agency with staff works dispersed in the whole country. The supervision should be directed to the achievement of the goals of the agency and not to time at which reports arrive at the headquarter of some other factor not closely linked to the goals.

Nearly always a change agency will have to cooperate with other agencies to achieve its goals. Unfortunately rivalries between governement agencies are quite common both in developed and in developing countries. Frequently these rivalries have a harmful effect on the achievement of the goals of the change agency. Therefore the agency should be organized in such a way that its staff is willing to make sacrifices in order to achieve a smooth cooperation with other agencies.

In order to be able to remain a leader in a rapidly changing society the change agency itself should be flexible enough to adjust rapidly to new needs and new development. Bennis (1966) gives strong arguments, although no empirical evidence, that a Weberian bureaucracy cannot achieve this flexibility. This requires a democratic pattern of leadership in which there is free and full communication regardless of rank and power, and where influence is based on technical competence rather than on the prerogatives of power.

Some other conditions for an efficient organization depend on the strategy the change agency uses.

To use orders as a strategy the same orders should be given by all agents in order to prevent confusion among and favoratism of clients. Also when means and services are provided to the clients rather strict rules should be followed in order to prevent favoratism of some clients or misuse of government funds. One of the ways to achieve this uniformity in rules is to work as a Weberian bureaucracy. It is also possible to achieve this uniformity with intensive group discussion at all levels of the organization with different groups overlapping each other in the way this has been described by Likert (1961). This last method can have the advantage that the rules are better understood by the whole staff and that the information all of them have is used to make the rules which are best adapted

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to the situation in the field. A serious disadvantage of Likert's method is in our opinion that with all these discussions a lot of time is required until the final decisions on the rules can be made.

What directive advice is given in a certain situation should depend on a careful analysis of this situation. As a rule there is a lot of variation in the situation, which makes it difficult to give the agent orders of the kind: "In case A, you advise B". Therefore the agent should have freedom to make his own decision on the basis of a continuous professional training, if necessary with the help of specialists. Perhaps in the first stages of development when capable agents are scarce a more directive leadership is better. Anyway the task of the people in the regional and national headquarters is to stimulate the people in the field, who do the real work, to work effectively. This requires an open and efficient communication from the people in the field to the headquarter staff, who are usually higher in rank.

For a strategy of non-directive help even more freedom for the local staff seems to be required. One can hardly imagine that they are able to accept the values of their clients and help them to make their own decisions as they get themselves orders to achieve certain targets or to follow certain procedures. One needs high level professional change agents who are capable and free to act according to the situation. The best way to supervise them is probably a non-directive counseling on the methods they have used in certain difficult cases. A major factor in their work is to deal with the feelings of their clients. Probably they are only able to do this effectively if their supervisers discuss their feelings with them in order to make them aware of their own feelings, which will otherwise unconsciously influence their relations with their clients.

A consequence of this discussion is that it seems hard to combine in one change agency a non-directive strategy with a strategy of giving orders A combination of a non-directive strategy with a strategy of providing means and services is probably only possible if the whole staff participates in the decisions regarding the rules according to which these means and services are distributed. It is an exception that these decisions are made in this way. The conditions for both strategies seem to be contradictory.

Groups influencing the change agencies program and methods

According to modern organization theory, influence in an organization should not only be exerted by the director, but by everybody who can make a contribution to the achievement of the goals of the organization. The problem is how to coordinate their contributions (e.g. Likert, 1967). We will first discuss which contributions can be expected from different groups to the program and methods the change agency uses to achieve its goals and afterwards turn our attention to the coordination problem.

Influence or the change agency's program and methods can be exerted by the director, by the subject matter specialists, by the field staff and by the clients or their representatives.

The director will be well informed on the situation external to the agency such as changes in government policy, in the programs of other agencies and on the resources available. Also the communication within the agency will be coordinated by him. If he is one of the most capable man in the agency, what he frequently is, he can give a fresh view by combining and analysing the information he gets from different sides in the agency. However, sometimes he is so busy that he has not enough time to think. Another important factor is the amount of distortion in the communication between him and his subordinates. Often he will be expected to make the final decisions regarding the agencies program and communicate these decisions to his staff.

The specialists will be best informed on the potential improvements which can come from new research findings. Frequently, however, they overestimate the importance of their own specialization. Also they are often participating in the analysis of the situation of the clients with regard to their specialization.

The field staff has the major share in the actual work of the change agency. This makes them frequently well informed on the situation of their clients and of the difficulties they face in their work. Not always they dare to communicate these difficulties upward.

The clients are best acquainted with their own situation and their own goals. Often their communication channels with the change agency do not work very efficient. Sometimes some of their representatives can advise on the change agencies program or even direct it. There is a reason to doubt whether these representatives are well acquainted with the situation and the problems of the other clients they represent (Likert and Lippitt, 1953), because they have not much interaction with the average client, who usually has a considerable lower level of social status.

Structure of the organization and pattern of leadership

The previous discussion makes clear that for a change agency an organizational structure has to be found which stimulates an efficient communication within the organization, a good communication and cooperation with other government agencies and a high level of motivation of the staff. How this can be achieved has recently been studied by a number of social psychologists and sociologists,(e.g. Argyris, 1962, Bennis, 1966, Likert, 1961 and 1967, Taub, 1969). Their conclusion is that the Weberian bureaucracy (Weber, 1956, p. 125-130) is harmful for these goals. This is especially the case with the "clearly defined hierarchy of offices". In a modern organization we need a cooperation between different specialists each of whom is more competent in his own field as one of the others. When they have the feeling that they got a fair share in the decision making they wil be more motivated to execute these decisions. The traditional hierarchy frequently causes a fear for the boss, which prevents the free communication of essential information to him. The impersonal relationships between officers make it difficult to communicate emotions and feelings which are essential both for sourd decision making and for motivation. The "clearly defined sphere of competence" of each office and the rules according to which the office is executed prevent the essential flexibility in a rapidly changing society.

In a modern organization there is a tendency towards a participative pattern of leadership, which stimulates by an open communication that the staff agrees about the goals of the organization and are motivated to try to achieve these goals. It also gives the superiors confidence in the ability of their subordinates to achieve these goals. When the subordinate faces difficulties he can expect help rather than to have to fear for punishment. Most of the decisions will be taken by a group of a superior with his subordinates. The superior can act as a linking pin with other groups at a higher level in the organization. The members of such a group will feel responsible not only for their own work, but for the work of the group as a whole.

One study has analysed the effects of different communication patterns on the coordination among different staff members of a change agency and on their initiative (Pelz, 1966). A combination of meetingsand personal contacts between staffmembers achieved a favorable score on both points, written communication + meetings was favorable for the coordination but very unfavorable for the initiative, whereas written + personal communication was unfavorable for the coordination and had no outspoken effects on the initiative of the staff.

The staff itself was convinced that they used written communication too much and personal contacts not enough to get things done. As the major factors blocking the development of more initiative one saw: excessive rules and red tape, insufficient delegation of authority and lack of recognition of merit. Lack of funds or supplies was of much less importance.

In some change agencies one gets the impression that the new ideas about participative leadership are applied. This happens especially with agencies with a social work background in developed countries, where the staff is often well acquainted with this social psychological research of management processes. In many other change agencies the staff has got a technical training in agriculture, medicine or whatever their field of change is. One gets the impression that it is an exception that directors of these agencies have studied recent research on management seriously. This happens in the USA, when they become a leave for study at an university once and a while and might get an advanceddegree in order to prepare themselves for a management position in their agency. In Europe, however, this is an exception. The managers of the change agencies are selected on basis of their personal qualities, but they do not get more than a few days of in service training in management, sometimes from teachers who are themselves not very well acquainted with modern developments in this field. On the basis of their intuition these people might work pretty well as leaders. One study found e.g. that only 12% of the field staff of a change agency said they liked to have some more responsibility than they actually had, and 65% answered that they decided about their own work in consultation with their superiors. However, group decisions were quite exceptional in this agency (Huizinga and Nath Asopa, 1968)

In other situations the pattern of leadership in change agencies is highly authoritarian. In one study 100% of the Block Development Officers, the superiors of the field staff agreed with the statement: "Without frequent and detailed inspection of his work, one cannot expect that a VLW (field officer) will do his work properly", whereas 56% of these VLW's agreed with the statement "If a VLW is quite active, he can easily get in trouble, but if he is friendly and obedient to higher authority without taking any initiative, he will not have any difficulty" (Van den Ban and Thorat, 1968). One reason might be that the superiors are not aware of the social psychological research on management and therefore continue to work in the old authoritarian way. It is also possible that they are aware of these ideas, but that they have not been trained to use them properly.

Cultural factors in the effect of different leadership patterns

In developing countries the leadership pattern in change agencies is often rather authoritarian, as we found in the last paragraph and the decision making is highly centralized (UN, 1961, p. 7). It may be that the participative pattern of leadership, which according to several studies works well in developed countries is not the best for their cultural situation. The modern patterns of management require a lot of initiative of all staff members of a change agency. In a rapidly changing society this initiative has to be taken under very uncertain conditions. In a society where one is used to be punished for failures but not often to be rewarded for accomplishments this is unpleasant.

An example of these cultural factors gives India. Many intellectuals read regularly the Ramayana, one of the holy books, for guidance in their life. A main theme in this book is that a son does well to fulfil the requests of his father, even if he knows quite well that his father was compelled to make this request, but not desired to do so. In such a tradition it is understandable that one is not trained to take the initiative modern management requires of subordinates in Western society.

Perhaps this is the explanation for one of the findings in the Van den Ban and Thorat study mentioned above. In this study it was found that the relations among the staff of the C.D. organization in India are very authoritarian. Probably as a result of these relations the attitudes of the C.D. staff towards the cultivators where also rather authoritarian. Also the C.D. staff took initiative only infrequently. At the same time most village leaders consider the C.D. staff as helpful or very helpful to them. This is a bit more true in villages with an authoritarian BDO than in villages with a democratic BDO. In these last kind of villages the VLW's were, according to the village leaders willing to listen to the cultivators, less than in villages with an authoritarian BDO.

There are other explanations possible, but it seems that a sudden change to a modern participative pattern of leadership in a change agency in this cultural situation has no favorable effects. In the long run when people are used to this pattern of leadership and have confidence that it will be used consistently, the situation might be different. However, without an empirical test this is not more than an hypothesis

In many developing countries the staff of the change agency is transferred every two or four years, that is just at the time they begin to become productive in stimulating change in the area. One is afraid that close ties between the staff of the change agency and some people in their area will promote favoratism. In some cases this fear may be justified for

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the provision of means and services, but for giving advice or non-directive help it is frequently detrimental.

The background of this need for rapid transfers can partly be sought in the patronage system which exists in many developing countries. Frequently the people expect that their patron will help them with the resources he has, or as broker to mediate with government officials and other influential people. In return these clients will support their patron in elections or with unpaid labor (Lele, 1966, Sociologische Gids,1969) The clients try to give the staff of the change agency the role they know for a high status person. That is the role of a patron. Therefore they expect this help from their agent, rather than advice how they can solve their own problems. The senior author asked e.g. in an Indian village what would happen if the VLW remained in the same circle of villagers for 10 year. The answer was prompt: "He would report that he had given a lecture in village A yesterday and the sarpanch (head) of the village would confirm this, whereas in fact he stayed at home. The sarpanch can expect in return a preference in the distribution of fertilizers or seeds." This villager expected that his VLW would only work if he is forced to and that he would use a kind of patron-client relationship to avoide this force. If the change agent accepts the role of a patron, which his clients expect him to take, this gives him an opportunity to influence them he would not have otherwise. However, it also had disadvantages such as the limitations on the development of independence among his clients. We are not aware of empirical research of this problem.

Organizational problems caused by a non-directive strategy

Theoretically a non-directive strategy has important advantages, but our impression is that it is not used very often. One of the reasons might be the difficulty it causes in the organization of the change agency. With a non-directive strategy the change agents might have to work on different problems with each client. An efficient organization becomes much easier with a standardization of the agencies program. Diffusion research has shown e.g. that for an effective introduction of new ideas different information channels have to be combined systematically, especially mass media and personal contactswith change agents. It is not possible to do so if each village asks for help with different new ideas.

This does not say that a non-directive strategy causes an ineffective change program. It is quite possible that the inefficiencies because of difficulties in the coordination of the program are offset by the increase in efficiency, because of the greater motivation of the clients to participate in the program and because of their increasing capability to solve their own problems. Probably in the short run the disadvantages are greater, whereas in the long run the advantages of the non-directive approach are becoming more important. This can be a reason for governments who are interested in short run effects and for change agents who expect to be transferred soon not to use a non-directive strategy.

In several countries representatives of the clients help in planning the change agencies program. However, often these representatives mainly rubberstamp the program made by the professional staff. For instance from the United states, a country with a long tradition in democracy, it is reported that: "It (the local coöpted association or committee) cannot become an effective part of the major policy determining structure of the (TVA)agency. In practice only a limited sphere of decision is permitted, involving some adaptation of general directives to local conditions." (Selznick, 1966,p. 221)

In other situations the change agents are subordinates of political leaders. Often this is intensively disliked by the change agents. One reason is that it is a blow to their dignity to have to accept orders from a politician with a lower level of education, who is considered to be of lower social st tus. It also happens that the change agents believe that these politiciansuse their influence not for the general interest, but for the interest of their party or their own group. Taub (1969) asked for instance 28 India IAS officers the opinion about the politician under whom they serve. Three said: "They are alright", nine: "they lack skill", eight: "self-interested", eight: "comparatively not bad" or "room for improvement" and four: "corrupt".

Another system is to subsidize by the government change programs of voluntary organizations. In theory the general assembly of members is the highest authority in the organizations, but it is no exception that in fact the professional staff is most powerful. Sometimes there are hardly any members as with the folk high schools in the Netherlands. In such situations a result is that you do not have one big government change program, but a number of small private ones, which are financed mainly by the subsidies which the government gives under certain conditions. An advantage of these organization can be that they are much more flexible than a big government bureaucracy. Sometimes this seems to be offset by

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disadvantages such as lack of specialization within the organization and a lack of flexibility when a new division of labor with other organizations becomes necessary. Again we are not aware of good empirical research on the consequences of this system of organizing change agencies.

Some factors affecting success of programs

It is well known that not all rural development planshave been a success. Ness (1967, p.240) says e.g.: "The most common observation about formal development plansin Southeast Asia is that they are found in every country in the region and in almost no case, with the unique exception of Malaya (and Singapore), they have not been implemented. Arcega (1968) makes the same observation about the Philippines: "The government has never faced a dearth in plans, projects or schemes to make the Philippines self-sufficient in rice. These were all ambitious plans which frizzled out as fast as they were officially launched. They are like typhoons... They come at the most unexpected moment, and for a while there is a lot of noise and excitement, but sooner or later they all pass away".

However, both authors describe also a program which has been successful in stimulating rural development: The Ministry of Rural Development in Malaya and Rice and Corn Production Coordinating Council in the Philippines. It seems to us that both programs have some common features, which might be responsible for its success:

1. An interest in output goals, rather than in moving files [1], and therefore the ability to make the necessary decisions without delay.
2. Clarity about the goals which have to be achieved.
3. Frequent inspection of the actual work in the field by the top leaders themselves.
4. A confidence of the staff that decisions are not taken arbitrarily, but that they will be rewarded if they do all they can to achieve the goals of the program and punished for their negligence or lack of industry.
5. The political power to coordinate the work of different Ministries and agencies.

The following quote from Ness (169/170) can illustrate some of these points: "Local officers do not fear the arbitrariness or capriciousness of the Minister (Who checks frequently and carefully on their work).

[1] A valuable analysis of a bureaucracy where there is a lot of interest in moving files according to all rules of the bureaucracy, and perhaps therefore not much corruption, gives Taub (1969)

They feel that they have a clear idea of what is required from them and that the tasks are not impossible, though they require hard work. They realize that they have to produce results, they have to move the bureaucracy and sometimes the people to do what is required. They also see that if they get out of their offices and tour their districts, they can be kept informed of the progress and the problems of the projects. They also know that there will be considerable rewards for them if they show industry and ingenuity in solving problems and moving ahead on the project. In describing the way other officers were reprimanded and punished by the Minister they acknowledge that the major cause of such punishment is the negligence and the lack of industry of the affected officers". "Perhaps the most significant aspect of Malaya's success is that it has been achieved not by separation of political power from development, but by infusion of that power in the development effort" (p. 240/1)

Probably both programs were not executed in a non-directive way. This is quite clear for Malaya" "The aim (of the village rural development committees) was not to discover the felt needs of the rural people, but to induce to work on what the government felt (probably rightly) to be their own needs" (Ness, 1967, p. 203) In the Philippine case the description is not quite clear on this point, but one gets the same impression. This does not mean that these governments were not interested in the welfare of the rural people. On the contrary they were highly interested in their political support and therefore in their welfare, but the interpretation of what is good for the welfare of the people was made mainly in government offices.

In some other change agencies the conditions for success mentioned above are not fulfilled. There it will help the officers personally very little, if they make a success of their program. This may be, because their superiors do not often go out in the field, but make the judgements on the quality of their staffs on the basis of reports, which are not always reliable.It also happens that salary scales are based on seniority rather than on achievement, whereas there are few opportunities for promotion. Elsewhere the personal relations with the superiors or with political bosses are more important than achievement of the agencies goals.

Another factor which seems to limit the effectiveness of some change agencies is the combination of the role of the change agent with that of the salesman, distributor of government grants, data collector for the bureau of census or even policeman. On this problem again there is very little research, except a study of Kalshoven (1969), who asked peasants what their image was of the change agents in Suriname. He found that they were seen

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less frequently as extension officers than as man who control the farmers, who supply them with seeds and fertilizers or who collect data for the census bureau. Indeed the change agents spend more time in collecting census data and in controlling farmers than in advising their clients. It is not only time what is involved, but confidence in the change agents is even more important. Most peasants do not believe that salesman and police men try to help them.

The difficulty is that in modernizing developing countries many new roles have to be fulfilled, whereas few capable people and not much money are available. Therefore one tries to give one person many different roles, without always asking whether or not these roles are compatible. The role of a non-directive change agent and of the man who controls the distribution of irrigation water are certainly not compatible.

Need for further research

With the increasing rate of change the role of change agencies in society becomes more and more important. There is a wedespread feeling that many change agencies are not working very effective, but research whether or not this feeling is correct and what factors are influencing the effectiveness of change agencies is quite scarce. It seems to us that further research could profitable be directed:

1. to the conditions which influence the effects of different change strategies on the major goals of the agencies
2. the effects of different patterns of leadership in change agencies on the communication processes within the agencies and between the agents and their clients, on the motivation of the change agents to work hard for the interest of clients and on the coordination among the staffmembers of one agency and of this agency with other agencies, which work in related fields
3. the influence of the culture on the effects of different leadership patterns
4. the effects of the combination of different tasks in one agency on role conflicts for the change agents and on the coordination of different activities.

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